

February 6, 2013

Secretary John Kerry
U.S Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of State.

Thank you for reaffirming your long-standing commitment to addressing climate change during your confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We applaud your bold statement that American foreign policy “is defined by leadership on life-threatening issues like climate change.”

The need for such leadership couldn't be more urgent. Climate change threatens our planet, our security, the health of our families, and the fate of communities and nations throughout the world. It is the greatest challenge of our time and our response will leave an historic legacy here in the U.S. and abroad.

Therefore, we urge you to use your position as Secretary to emphasize the severity of the threat and spur bold and immediate action. Under your leadership at the State Department, the U.S. should take three decisive steps to become an international leader on addressing dangerous climate change:

1. **Push for strong international action on climate change.** The U.S. must play a leadership role in shaping a fair and ambitious international agreement that includes concrete actions from all key countries to put the world on a path to averting the worst impacts of climate change. Strong domestic action using existing law to reduce carbon pollution from power plants is a key strategy for meeting the President's domestic emissions reduction targets and would set an example for other countries for this key sector. Assertive action across all State Department and other international programs will also be necessary to ensure that all our international efforts are moving in the right direction, including on climate finance. We must also aggressively pursue other approaches, such as securing fair agreements to phase-down HFCs, reduce carbon pollution from aviation and shipping through strong global action, and spur action to reduce short-lived climate forcers like methane and soot.
2. **Reject any new or expanded infrastructure for tar sands oil, starting with the Keystone XL pipeline.** At a time when we must rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, the U.S. must demonstrate bold leadership by refusing to aid the expansion of this destructive and carbon-intensive industry. A first step towards stopping the expansion of tar sands oil should be the rejection of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. This pipeline is not in our national interest – the evidence shows it would unlock vast

amounts of additional carbon that we cannot afford to burn, extend our dangerous addiction to fossil fuels, endanger health and safety, and put critical water resources at risk. As an export pipeline, it will not support U.S. energy security. We urge you to ensure the State Department has a full understanding of the climate and environmental impacts of this pipeline which have been previously ignored. We also urge that any decision on Keystone XL be made in the context of the President's call to address climate change by moving away from reliance on carbon intensive fuels towards clean, renewable energy sources.

- 3. Secure robust funding for international climate action.** The U.S. must maintain and increase our investments in critical international actions to address climate change and the impacts that are already being felt, particularly in developing countries and the most vulnerable communities. These investments are essential to promoting global solutions to climate change; protecting our national interests and economic competitiveness, shared security, and development goals; and enabling developing countries and vulnerable communities to plan and prepare for climate-related disasters and losses. It is vital that the U.S. secure robust financing for international climate action and implement a clear trajectory for ramping up U.S. finance between now and 2020, including the mobilization of innovative sources of public finance. In addition, the U.S. should ensure that all our international investments promote low-carbon development pathways and support climate resilience and preparedness, especially for the most vulnerable communities.

Securing strong international action, rejecting dirty fuels, and mobilizing climate finance serve vital U.S. interests. These actions will play a critical role in reducing climate change, promoting global stability and human security, creating economic opportunities for U.S. businesses and workers, helping to alleviate global poverty, protecting past U.S. development investments, complementing global health and food security efforts, protecting critical forest areas and biodiversity, ensuring significant cost-savings through disaster preparedness measures, and better enabling the United States to achieve its other diplomatic and national security objectives. Accordingly, we urge you to make these actions a top priority of your international agenda.

We are committed to working with you every step of the way.

Sincerely,

350.org

350 Massachusetts

ActionAid USA

Alaska Wilderness League

Appalachian Mountain Club

Audubon Society of New Hampshire

Better Future Project

CARE USA

Center for Biological Diversity
Center for International Environmental Law
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Clean Water Action
Climate Solutions
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Conservation Law Foundation
CREDO
Earth Day Network
Earthjustice
EcoEquity
Energy Action Coalition
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Environmental Defense Fund
Environment America
Environment Maine
Environment Minnesota
Environment Northeast
ForestEthics
Friends of the Earth US
Greenpeace
Interfaith Power & Light
Institute for Policy Studies' Sustainable Energy & Economy Network
International Forum on Globalization
Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environment-Nepal
Kids vs Global Warming
KyotoUSA
League of Conservation Voters
Massachusetts Climate Action Network
Moms Clean Air Force
National Climate Ethics Campaign
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Natural Resources Defense Council

Oil Change International
Pacific Environment
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Population Action International
Rainforest Action Network
Safe Climate Campaign
Sierra Club
Sierra Club, Delaware Chapter
Sierra Club Maine
Sierra Club Vermont Chapter
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
The Center of Concern
Union of Concerned Scientists
Unitarian Universalist Association
United Methodist Women
US Bangladesh Advisory Council
Will Steger Foundation
World Wildlife Fund